



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WSDA proposes increase in grain inspection fees

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is proposing to increase fees for some grain inspection services as part of a comprehensive revision of the rule governing WSDA's Grain Inspection Program. The proposal takes into account increases in health care coverage and cost of living adjustments proposed by the governor and legislature and includes changes intended to reduce operational shortfalls at eastern Washington service locations.

The proposal would change tonnage-based assessments from short tons (2000 pounds) to metric tons (2204.6 pounds) to align with industry standards, and would increase rates for inspecting submitted samples, bagged commodity inspection services, and for hourly-based services. It also includes a new service, "applicant assisted railcar sampling", that would reduce inspection costs for some shipments. Many small, miscellaneous fee categories found in the current fee schedule have been eliminated and multiple references to the same service have been consolidated to improve user understanding.

"The program is entirely funded by the fees for service. The proposed fee adjustments will cover the cost of providing services if inspection volumes meet the levels seen in 2002 and 2003", said Randy Deike, manager of the Grain Inspection Program. Deike also noted that export volumes seen in 2004 were exceptional and in recognition of the efficiencies that some export facilities can achieve, the proposal includes a significant reduction in fees when exports at a given facility exceed 4 million metric tons per year.

A public hearing on the proposed changes is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on April 28 in Room 271 at the Washington State Department of Agriculture, 1111 Washington St., in Olympia. Written comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. that day. If approved, the new rule would go into effect July 1.

The Grain Inspection Program provides inspection, analytical and weighing services for grain, dry peas, lentils, and rapeseed sold in or from Washington. State law requires that user fees be adequate to recover costs of providing inspection or other requested services.

For a copy of the proposed rules, call Randy Deike, (360) 902-1921, or visit the WSDA Web site at http://www.wa.gov/agr/Inspection/GrainInspection/Rule_Revision.htm. Send written comments to the WSDA Commodity Inspection Division, P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504-2560. Comments may also be faxed to (360) 902-2085, or by e-mail to rdeike@agr.wa.gov.

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